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FM AMEMBASSY KABUL
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INFO RUMJPRG/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 3636
RUS30D/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD 9054
RUDIC/AMEMBASSY LONDON 1701
RUENMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW 1764
RUS2AE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI 7119
RUFNPS/AMEMBASSY PARIS 3173
RUOMHR/AMEMBASSY TEHRAN 7347
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25 JUL 79 05 34Z

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 KABUL 5629

CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD; USICA FOR NEA

E.O. 12055: GDS 7/24/85 (AMSTUTZ, J. BRUCE) OR-M
TAGS: PSPF, AMR, ASEC, PINS, SHUM, US, AF
SUBJ: (C) AFGHAN GOVERNMENT COMPLAINS ABOUT EVACUATION OF
AMERICAN DEPENDENTS FROM AFGHANISTAN

REF: (A) STATE 191571, (F) STATE 192952, (C) KABUL 5544

1. (C - ENTIRE TEXT)

2. SUMMARY: ON JULY 24, THE GOVERNMENT OF THE DEMOCRATIC
REPUBLIC OF AFGHANISTAN (DRA) OFFICIALLY EXPRESSED ITS DIS-
PLEASURE OVER THE U.S. DECISION TO EVACUATE AMERICAN DEPENDENTS
AND LEAST ESSENTIAL PERSONNEL FROM AFGHANISTAN, AND ALSO
COMPLAINED ABOUT THE ATTENDANT PUBLICITY. THE DRA TERMED THE
U.S. ACT AS "AGAINST THE SPIRIT AND DESIRE OF THE DRA FOR THE
MAINTENANCE OF NORMAL FRIENDLY RELATIONS WITH THE UNITED
STATES." END SUMMARY.

3. ON JULY 24, I WAS SUMMONED ON ONE-HOUR'S NOTICE TO THE FOREIGN MINISTRY BY SHAH MOHAMMAD DOST, FIRST DEPUTY MINISTER FOR POLITICAL AFFAIRS. A/DCM FLATIN ACCOMPANIED ME.

4. DOST OPENED THE CONVERSATION BY OBSERVING ACIDLY THAT, IN SPITE OF MY ASSURANCES OF THE PRECEDING DAY THAT THE US DID NOT INTEND TO PUBLICIZE THE EVACUATION OF AMERICAN DEPENDENTS AND LEAST ESSENTIAL PERSONNEL FROM AFGHANISTAN (REF C), BOTH THE VOICE OF AMERICA AND BBC HAD CARRIED THE NEWS ONLY HOURS LATER. DOST COMMENTED THAT HE HAD FEARED THAT THIS MIGHT HAPPEN, BUT HAD NEVERTHELESS CONVEYED MY ASSURANCES TO PRIME MINISTER HAFIZULLAH AMIN IMMEDIATELY AFTER YESTERDAY'S CONVERSATION.

5. WITHOUT SPECIFICALLY CITING MY OTHER ASSURANCE OF JULY 23 -- THAT THE USG DID NOT INTEND TO EMPHATICALLY STATE POLITICALLY WITH ITS EVACUATION DECISION, DOST DEPLORED IN PARTICULAR THE VOA'S TYING THE EVACUATION STORY TOGETHER WITH ALLEGATIONS THAT THE AFGHAN REGIME IS NOT ABLE TO MAINTAIN ORDER IN AFGHANISTAN. HE SAID, "YOU AND I BOTH KNOW THAT THERE ARE NO PROBLEMS IN KABUL -- AND OTHER EMBASSIES ARE NOT MAKING THIS MOVE." I EXPLAINED THE SECURITY REASONS FOR OUR DECISION AGAIN IN SOME DETAIL. ALTHOUGH DOST DID COMMENT ABOUT THE ROAD INCIDENTS I CITED, HE DISMISSED MY CITATION OF THE MAY 9 CLOSURE OF KABUL AIRPORT DURING NEARBY FIGHTING, ARGUING THAT IT HAD BEEN CLOSED FOR "ONLY A FEW HOURS."

6. DOST ALSO COMPLAINED THAT THE VOA ANNOUNCEMENT CONTAINED ALLEGATIONS ABOUT HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS, "SUCH AS THE EXECUTION OF 3,000 POLITICAL PRISONERS." HE REGARDED SUCH STATEMENTS AS UNFAIR BECAUSE ALL HIS GOVERNMENT COULD DO IS REPLY TO THEM AFTER THEY HAD ALREADY BEEN PUBLICIZED TO THE WORLD.

7. IN RESPONSE, I INFORMED DOST THAT IT HAD BEEN THE INTENTION OF THE USG NOT TO INITIATE ANY PUBLICITY ABOUT THE EVACUATION, BUT THAT OUR DEPARTMENT OF STATE PRESS SPOKESMAN HAD BEEN PREPARED TO ANSWER QUESTIONS SHOULD THE MATTER BE RAISED AT A DAILY NOONTIME PRESS CONFERENCE. I EXPLAINED THAT THE SUBJECT HAD INDEED BEEN RAISED IN SUCH A FASHION AT HIS JULY 23 PRESS BRIEFING (REFTELS A AND B), AND THAT THEREFORE HE HAD TO RESPOND. AS FOR THE OTHER ISSUES OF SECURITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS, VOA HAD PRESUMABLY DECIDED FOR JOURNALISTIC REASONS TO ADD THEM TO THE STORY. I TOLD DOST THAT THE USG CONTINUES TO REGARD WITH GREAT CONCERN THE CIVIL RIGHTS SITUATION IN AFGHANISTAN, BUT REMINDED HIM THAT THE USA IS NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR THE CONTENT OF VOA BROADCASTS. DOST NOTED BRIEFLY THAT THE BRITISH EMBASSY HERE MAKES THE SAME DISCLAIMER ABOUT BBC BROADCASTS.

8. WHILE SPEAKING OF VOA'S NEW PERSIAN-LANGUAGE PROGRAM FOR THIS REGION, DOST TOLD US THAT, IN SPITE OF THE FACT THAT THE VOA'S BROADCAST TIME OF 2300 IS TOO LATE FOR MOST AFGHAN LISTENERS, HIS GOVERNMENT TAPES EACH BROADCAST AND MONITORS ITS CONTENT. DOST ALSO NOTED THAT VOA HAD RECENTLY ADDED SOME DARI (AFGHAN PERSIAN) CONTENT TO THE PROGRAM, WHICH OTHERWISE IS BASICALLY IN FARSI (IRANIAN PERSIAN).

9. I ASSURED DOST THAT I WAS SORRY ABOUT ANY EMBARRASSMENT THAT HAD BEEN CAUSED HIS GOVERNMENT, BUT THAT I HOPED THAT HE NOW UNDERSTOOD HOW IT HAD ALL COME ABOUT. I REPEATED THAT RE OUR EVACUATION WE ONLY WERE DOING WHAT WE REGARDED AS NECESSARY, OBSERVING THAT THE AMERICAN MISSION HERE HAD UNDERGONE A GREAT REDUCTION IN SIZE SINCE THE REVOLUTION. DOST NOTED THAT "WITHOUT AN AID PROGRAM, AID PERSONNEL ARE UNNECESSARY."

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 C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 KAEUL 5679

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12. DOST THANKED ME FOR MY EXPLANATION. HE TOLD ME THAT HIS GOVERNMENT HOPED THAT "THINGS WILL BECOME BETTER" IN OUR "NORMAL" STATE OF RELATIONS, ADDING: "THAT'S THE SPIRIT OF OUR RECENT ACTIONS; THAT IS OUR DESIRE." HE REPEATED HIS COMMENT OF JULY 23 THAT THE SAFETY OF AMERICANS IS OUR OWN BUSINESS, BUT WONDERED WHY WE HAD TO HAVE A BIG PRODUCTION OVER THEIR DEPARTURE. I REPLIED THAT IT WAS DIFFICULT TO MASK THE DEPARTURE OF ONE HUNDRED PEOPLE. DOST THEN WONDERED WHY THE DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN COULD NOT HAVE STALLED UNTIL THIS "SENSITIVE" OPERATION HAD BEEN CONCLUDED. HE OBSERVED SADLY: "THIS IS JUST THE BEGINNING; I AM NOW WAITING FOR OTHERS." (NOTE: I HAD INFORMED DOST EARLIER THAT I WAS BRIEFING "FRIENDLY" EMBASSIES ABOUT OUR DECISION.)

11. I REASSURED DOST THAT THE USS ALSO WANTS FRIENDLY, NORMAL RELATIONS WITH THE DRA -- AND, ONCE AGAIN, DENIED THAT WE WERE ENGAGED IN ANY SUBVERSIVE ANTI-KHALQI EFFORTS. IN THIS CONTEXT, I MENTIONED THE UNHELPFUL EFFECTS OF OBLIQUE -- AND NOT-SO-OBLIQUE -- "HINTS" IN THE LOCAL MEDIA THAT WE WERE SO INVOLVED, CITING SPECIFICALLY THE FALSE PICTURE STATEMENTS ABOUT US ARMS BEING CAPTURED. (NOTE: IT IS TO DOST'S CREDIT, HOWEVER, THAT SINCE OUR DEMARCHE OF JUNE 1982 TO HIM ABOUT PHONY NEWSPAPER PHOTOGRAPHS OF "AMERICAN WEAPONS" ALLEGEDLY SEIZED FROM ANTI-DRA GUERRILLAS, THAT WE HAVE NOT SEEN THIS PARTICULAR LIE REPEATED IN THE PRESS.)

12. THE MEETING ENDED ON A FRIENDLIER, MORE RELAXED NOTE THAN IT OPENED. UPON OUR DEPARTURE, DOST HANDED ME AN AIDE MEMOIRE, WHICH, AFTER TRANSLATION AT THE EMBASSY, APPEARED TO BE MUCH STIFFER IN TONE THAN HIS ORAL PRESENTATION. ITS TEXT FOLLOWS:

"MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
 JULY 24, 1979
 KAEUL

"TO: EMBASSY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
KABUL

"AIDE MEMOIRE

"IN CONNECTION WITH THE TALKS OF THE FIRST DEPUTY MINISTER OF THE FOREIGN AFFAIRS MINISTRY OF DRA WITH J. BRUCE AMSTUTZ, CHARGE D'AFFAIRES OF THE U.S. EMBASSY IN KABUL ON JULY 23, 1979, AND THE (LATTER'S) RELATED AIDE MEMOIRE, THE CONCERN OF U.S. AUTHORITIES REGARDING THEIR CITIZENS IN KABUL AND THEIR PLACES OF WORK IN OTHER REGIONS (OF AFGHANISTAN), AND THE EVACUATION OF SOME OF THEM FROM KABUL HAS NO ACCEPTABLE REASON.

"THE SITUATION IN KABUL AND IN OTHER PLACES OF THEIR WORK IS CALM AND SECURITY HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED. NECESSARY SECURITY MEASURES FOR THE PROTECTION OF FOREIGN MISSIONS AND THEIR NATIONALS HAVE BEEN ADOPTED ALONG AGO.

"NONE OF THE OTHER FOREIGN MISSIONS HAVE YET SHOWN SUCH A CONCERN, AND THE AMERICAN EMBASSY IS THE FIRST TO TAKE THE LEAD IN THIS CASE. THIS MEASURE OF THE U.S. EMBASSY WILL CREATE NEGATIVE ANXIETIES AND PROPAGANDA WHICH WILL HELP THE GOALS OF THE ENEMIES OF THE REVOLUTION AND THE PEOPLE OF AFGHANISTAN.

"THIS PLAN COULD HAVE WORKED OUT IN A CALM AND QUIET FORM WITHOUT BEING PUBLICIZED; BUT, BEFORE THE DEPARTURE OF THE EVACUEES, PROPAGANDISTIC SOURCES HAVE ALREADY TAKEN STEPS TO MAKE PROPAGANDA REGARDING THEIR LEAVING. THIS ACT OF YOUR EMBASSY CAN BE CONSIDERED AGAINST THE SPIRIT AND WISH OF DRA FOR MAINTAINING NORMAL FRIENDLY RELATIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES."

END OF TEXT.

13. COMMENT: THE DRA CLEARLY RESENTS OUR EVACUATION DECISION, REGARDING IT AS A HOSTILE POLITICAL ACT. WE DO NOT EXPECT ANY SPECIFIC RETRIBUTION AT THIS TIME, HOWEVER.

14. IN VIEW OF THE SENSITIVITY AND VULNERABILITY OF OUR CURRENT EVACUATION OPERATION, THE EMBASSY HOPES THAT USG SPOKESMEN WILL BE CAREFUL ABOUT HOW THIS EVACUATION IS HANDLED. WE WERE PARTICULARLY DISTRESSED TO NOTE THAT THE RECENT "WASHINGTON POST" REPORT ON AFGHANISTAN CITING US OFFICIAL SOURCES AND IMPLYING POSSIBLE EMBASSY KABUL CONTRIBUTIONS (STATE 190634) APPEARED AT APPROXIMATELY THE

SAME TIME AS OUR EVACUATION DECISION. THIS COINCIDENCE COMPLICATED OUR RELATIONS WITH THE DRA SINCE THEY SEEMED TO TIE THE TWO TOGETHER. AMSTUTZ

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